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COWAN HEADLINES OVERFLOW FIELD FOR OPENING NIGHT WILLIAM WALKER

LOUISVILLE, KY (Wednesday, April 21, 2021) – **Bill and Corinne Heiligbrodt, Madaket Stables and Spendthrift Farm's Cowan**, runner-up in last fall's Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf Sprint (Grade II), tops a field of 10 3-year-olds and two also-eligibles entered in Saturday's sixth running of the \$125,000 William Walker (Listed).

The William Walker will highlight Saturday's Opening Night Presented by Budweiser 10-race program to kick off the 38-day Spring Meet that runs through June 26.

The William Walker, scheduled to be run over the Matt Winn Turf Course at 5 ½ furlongs for the first time, will go as the evening's ninth race with a 10:11 p.m. post time (all times Eastern). First post time is 6 o'clock. The temporary rail on the turf course will be in Lane 3, 22 feet from the inside hedge for racing Saturday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The rail will be taken down for racing on Oaks and Derby Days.

Trained by **Steve Asmussen**, Cowan returns to the races four weeks after finishing 10th against older horses beaten only 4 ¾ lengths in the Al Quoz Sprint (GI) in Dubai. **Luis Saez**, who was aboard in Dubai, has the call Saturday night and will exit post eight.

Wesley Ward, who sent out the most recent winner of the William Walker in 2019 with the filly **Jo Jo Air**, will be represented by two runners: **Breeze Easy's Roderick** and **Silverton Hill's Next**.

Roderick, who will be ridden by **Drayden Van Dyke** and exit post one, returns to the grass for the first time since finishing fifth in the Indian Summer last fall at Keeneland.

Next, who will be ridden by **John Velazquez** from post two, won his only start on the grass with that coming at Kentucky Downs in a maiden race. Saturday will mark his first start since chasing champion **Essential Quality** in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) in November.

The field for the William Walker, with riders from the inside, is: Roderick (Van Dyke), Next (Velazquez), **Field Day** (Tyler Gaffalione), **Kasim** (Gerardo Corrales), **Unitedandresolute** (Florent Geroux), **Rockstar Ro** (Corey Lanerie), **Bodenheimer** (Brian Hernandez Jr.), Cowan (Saez), **Cees Get Degrees** (Colby Hernandez) and **Lookin for Loki** (Mitchell Murrill). Also-eligibles: **Into the Sunrise** (Velazquez) and **Charles Chrome** (Julien Leparoux). All starters will carry 118 pounds.

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